

# Planning and Zoning Department Annual Report

2007

---

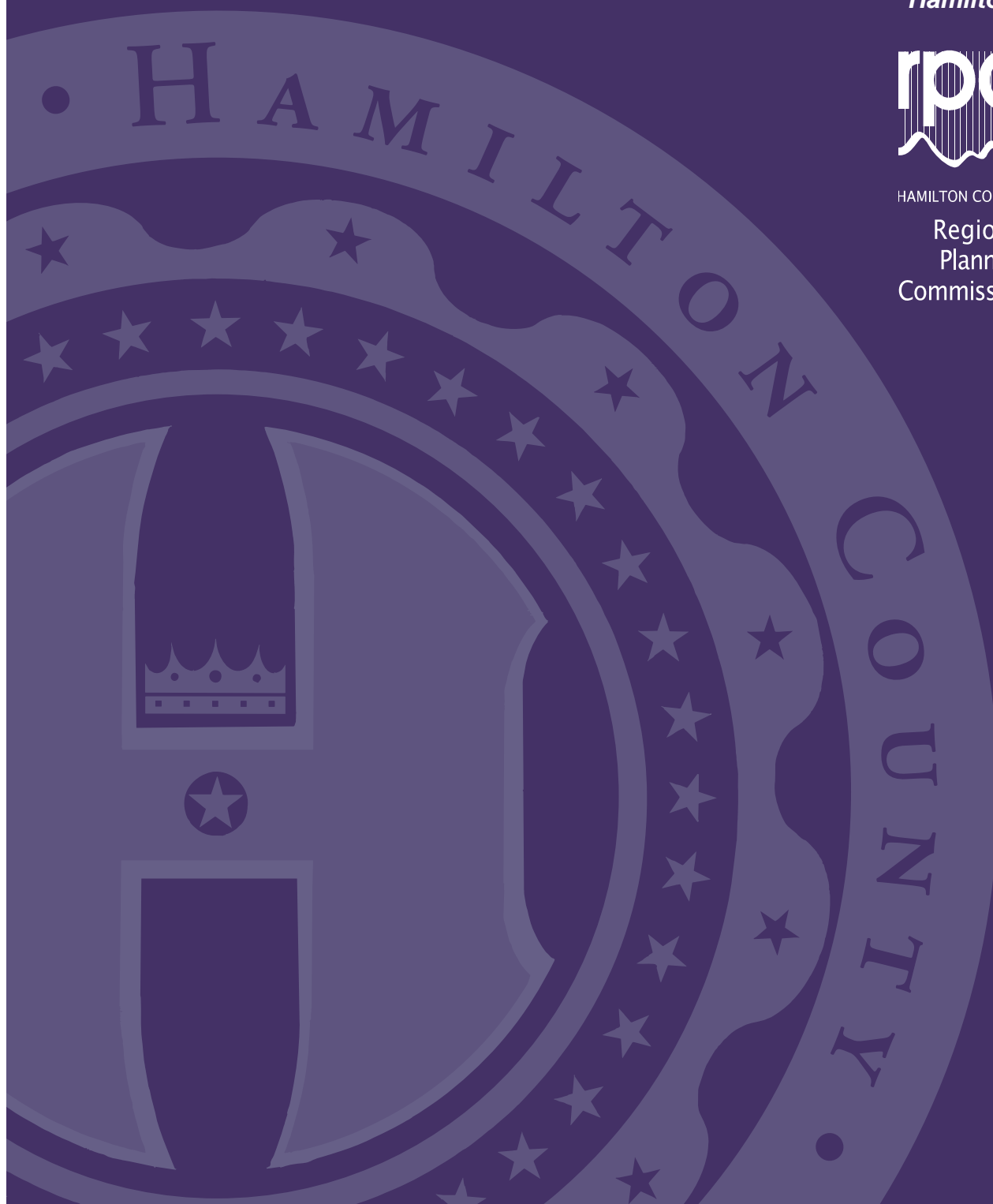
*Hamilton County, Ohio*



HAMILTON COUNTY  
Regional  
Planning  
Commission



HAMILTON COUNTY  
Rural  
Zoning  
Commission





## Director's Message

---

*Building on a track record of over 30 national awards during the past five years, our work in 2007 again resulted in national recognition for new innovative programs in planning as well as administration and management.*

### To Those We Serve:

We are pleased to provide you with the 2007 Annual Report of Hamilton County's Planning and Zoning Department as well as the commissions we serve—Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission, the Planning Partnership (RPC's long range planning committee), and Hamilton County Rural Zoning Commission.

With critical support of county commissioners, jurisdiction members and our many organization partners, we are able to report another year of successes in our core functions of community planning, data products, development services (zoning and subdivision), and zoning services (permits and enforcement). During 2007, we also finalized an important transition that joins RPC with the community development department (federal grants administration) as an additional core function—creating great potential for increased alignment of related functions and greater effectiveness in our community building initiatives.

In 2007, our expanding partnerships made it possible to assist communities in Hamilton County in comprehensively planning and collaboratively achieving community and regional goals identified in Hamilton County's comprehensive plan—Community COMPASS. In this report you will find more information about progress being made on important implementation initiatives such as:

- Government Cooperation and Efficiency Project
- Project Impact
- First Suburbs Consortium
- Local Alliance for Nature and Development
- Certified Planning Commissioners' Program
- Community Action Network Directory
- Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

This report, as well as additional information about our work and progress, is available on our web site at [www.hamiltoncountyohio.gov/hcrpc](http://www.hamiltoncountyohio.gov/hcrpc). We would very much welcome any feedback, ideas, and suggestions from readers of this report about how we can better serve Hamilton County communities in working together toward planning, zoning and community development goals.

We look forward to hearing from you.

RONALD E. MILLER, EXECUTIVE  
Executive Director

# Table of Contents



Vision and Mission .....	ii
Awards .....	1
Planning Commission .....	2
Frank F. Ferris II Planning Award.....	3
Planning Partnership .....	4
Community Planning .....	8
Information Technology / Data Products .....	16
Development Review.....	18
Zoning Commission.....	23
Financials.....	26
Planning and Zoning Staff .....	27
Committees, Teams, and Board Memberships.....	28



## Planning and Zoning Department

# Vision & Mission



### RPC Vision

To assist Hamilton County and its communities, agencies and citizens in planning and achieving sustainable development and related community and regional goals.

### RPC Mission

- To build planning partnerships for creating and implementing community plans in the context of the region.
- To provide data management and analysis for effective planning decision-making in Hamilton County governments.
- To promote an equitable balance of local, county and regional perspectives and interests in community planning forums.



### RZC Vision

To have all development in compliance with Hamilton County zoning regulations as well as consistent with the land use goals and objectives of the region and each affected township.

### RZC Mission

To administer and enforce the zoning regulations adopted by the Board of County Commissioners and the citizens of Hamilton County while continually improving public awareness and understanding of the importance of zoning in protecting public health, safety and welfare as well as private property.

## 2007 Awards



### National Awards

Award	Performance Area	Awarded By
2007 Achievement Award for County Administration and Management	Community Action Network Directory	National Association of Counties (NACo)
2007 Achievement Award for County Administration and Management	Green Building Web Page Local Alliance for Nature & Development Hamilton County	National Association of Counties (NACo)
2007 Achievement Award for Innovative Programs in Planning	Listening to Bio Technology Leaders: An Interview Study	National Association of Counties (NACo)



# Planning Commission

## Planning Commissioners, 2007

- Hal Franke, Chair (reappointed 2004, current term expires 2009)
- Melvin D. Martin (reappointed 2005, current term expires 2010)
- Donald Misrach (reappointed 2006, current term expires 2011)
- John Linnenberg (appointed April 2005, current term expires 2009)
- David Okum (re-elected 2006, current term expires 2011)
- Larry Sprague, Vice-Chair (reappointed 2005, current term expires 2010)
- James Tarbell (reappointed 2006, resigned October, 2007)
- Roxanne Qualls (appointed October, 2007, current term expires 2011)

The Regional Planning Commission (RPC) provides advisory planning and development review services to the unincorporated areas (12 townships) of the County. It also provides similar services upon request to 37 County municipalities that are members of the Commission and pay annual fees. The Commission's various planning activities include programs for subdivision compliance, community planning, development review and Census/data and information systems. The Commission's services are tied to annual work programs that monitor development trends, evaluate current policies, and update the Hamilton County Master Plan and related regulations for zoning, subdivision of land and traffic circulation.

The Commission is responsible for determining consistency of development proposals with adopted plans for township areas. Land use control responsibilities also include development review for consistency with zoning regulations, subdivision rules, and thoroughfare plans. Staff makes advisory zoning recommendations to the Hamilton County Rural Zoning Commission and to township and municipal zoning commissions. The RPC administers and takes final actions on land subdivision for the entire unincorporated area. It coordinates the multi-agency review of subdivision plans and ensures conformity with the County's regulations.

RPC prepares and disseminates information and maps on a variety of subjects related to planning, and this information is available for public and agency use. It maintains Census and other data on population, housing, zoning, building activity, socioeconomic development, school trends, and many physical and land use features. The staff coordinates and assigns street address numbers for the unincorporated areas and several municipalities. The Commission's staff also supports the various functions of the Rural Zoning Commission, the Planning Partnership, the Cincinnati Area Geographic Information System (CAGIS), the Community Development Department, the First Suburbs Consortium, the Hamilton County Caucus of OKI Representatives and other boards, committees, and task forces.

The Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission is a seven member board. The composition of this Commission (whose members serve five-year terms) is as follows:

- Four (4) residents of the unincorporated area of Hamilton County, who are nominated by Township Trustees and other interested parties, and appointed by the Board of County Commissioners
- One (1) resident of a City or Village with a planning commission, who is appointed by the Board of County Commissioners
- One (1) resident of a City or Village with a planning commission, exclusive of Cincinnati, who is elected by mail ballot of municipal planning commissions
- One (1) resident from the City of Cincinnati appointed by the Cincinnati Planning Commission

## Frank F. Ferris II Award



The creation of the Frank F. Ferris II Planning Award by the Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission recognizes and honors the lifelong dedication of Mr. Ferris to municipal, county and regional planning activities. It publicly recognizes and promotes outstanding contributions to community planning in Hamilton County. RPC presents the award annually to a local planning commission or committee that best embodies planning ideals and demonstrates civic, economic, aesthetic and environmental significance.

The 2006 Frank F. Ferris II Planning Award (given in 2007) was presented to the City of Montgomery for their Montgomery Road Corridor Design Guidelines. A First Suburb, the City of Montgomery is very proud of its downtown Heritage District. The charm of this district has been protected and enhanced through use of strict standards such as the Montgomery Road Corridor Design Guidelines which set up eight goals to achieve its purpose:

Goal 1: The City will have a defined and efficient process and guidelines for development and redevelopment of the corridor.

Goal 2: The Montgomery Road Corridor will have a desirable and quality image.

Goal 3: The Montgomery Road Corridor will be recognized as a regional model, balancing a unified quality image with local business identity and functional needs.

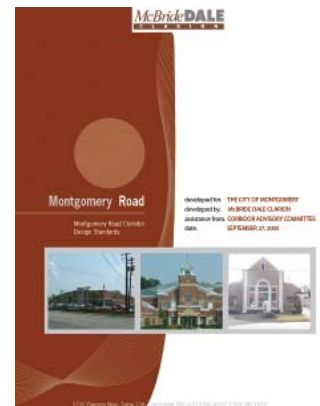
Goal 4: The Corridor will draw inspiration from design elements in the Heritage District that can be successfully interpreted in a modern suburban setting with modern materials.

Goal 5: The Corridor will promote healthy and viable businesses.

Goal 6: Negative land use impacts on adjacent residential neighborhoods will be minimized and mitigated through design.

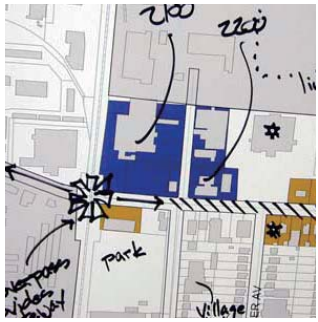
Goal 7: Traffic circulation will be accommodated in a safe and efficient manner, but will be balanced with pedestrian scale and safety.

Goal 8: Flexibility in the design guidelines that allows for development of individual sites in a manner that recognizes that one size does not always fit all, but will allow substitutions that are equivalent to the desired guidelines of quality architecture and site design.



### Montgomery Road Corridor Design Guidelines





# Planning Partnership



**Chairperson**  
Richard Finan  
Municipal Representative



**Chairperson-Elect**  
Gwen McFarlin  
Township Representative



**Vice-Chairperson**  
Chris Bortz  
City of Cincinnati Representative

## Mission

To bring together public, private and civic sector organizations engaged in community planning in Hamilton County so that mutual goals related to physical, economic and social issues can be planned for comprehensively and achieved collaboratively.

## Membership

Membership in the Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission (HCRPC) is on an annual basis. Payment establishes joint membership in both the Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission and the Planning Partnership. Local government funding enables continuation of HCRPC staff support to local governments for a variety of initiatives, including:

- Project Impact
- First Suburbs Consortium
- Local Alliance for Nature and Development
- Hamilton County Caucus
- The Certified Planning Commissioners' Program
- Community COMPASS
- Hamilton County Data Center
- Community Action Network Directory
- Development Services
- Planning Services

## Government Cooperation and Efficiency Project (GCEP)

Exploring Opportunities for Shared Services

Many jurisdictions in Hamilton County are already involved in shared service initiatives of their own will. To try to discover additional types of service sharing that would help local government leaders save money or solve service capacity problems, the Planning Partnership of the Hamilton County Regional Commission sponsored the Government Cooperation and Efficiency Project (GCEP).

GCEP is a voluntary effort designed to help local communities improve service delivery and control costs through cross-jurisdictional cooperation, sharing of services and possible service delivery consolidation. All 50 local governments in the county – cities, villages and township, plus the County itself – were included in this effort.

Early conveners of the project were Chris Bortz, Planning Partnership Vice-Chair and Pat DeWine, Hamilton County Commissioner. Project funding of \$150,000 was provided by the City of Cincinnati, Hamilton County and the Cincinnati Business Committee. A Steering Committee, chaired by Senator Richard Finan, Planning Partnership Chairman, and George Schaefer, Chairman Fifth Third Bancorp, was established to guide the project.



# Planning Partnership



Management Partners Inc. provided staff support in partnership with staff of RPC, Citizens for Civic Renewal and Center for Local Government.

The first phase of GCEP was completed in 2007. Groups met several times to generate ideas and discuss implementation of service sharing opportunities. Three working groups developed ideas for cooperation: (1) Finance, administrative and general services, (2) Public works services, and (3) Economic development, community development and planning services. The project scope also included research on tax administration, fire, public health, water provision, and solid waste and recycling, and State incentives to local governments.

As a result of economies of scale in the delivery of local government services—one of the benefits of multi-jurisdictional cooperation—the project resulted in quick gains for participants. Already 14 jurisdictions have identified potential savings of approximately \$500,000 from bulk salt purchase, fuel purchase, street sign/markings, and fire hydrant maintenance. The Steering Committee identified 12 projects for detailed implementation planning to begin in 2008:

- Bulk Road Salt Purchasing
- Bulk Fuel and Daily Fuel Purchasing
- Bulk Office Supply Purchasing
- Training and Professional Development
- Human Resources
- Information Technology Services
- Grant Coordination and Acquisition
- Public Works Equipment Sharing/ Contracting
- Public Works Specialized Training
- Fleet Maintenance
- Fire Hydrant Maintenance
- Street Signs and Markings

## Annual Meeting

The 2007 Planning Partnership Annual Meeting took place on Wednesday, May 2, 2007 at the Harold C. Schott Educational Center at the Cincinnati Zoo. The keynote speaker was Andres Duany, leader of the New Urbanism movement on the topic Rediscovering New Urbanism in the First Suburbs.

## Introductory Workshop for Newly Elected Officials

On Saturday, December 1, 2007, newly elected officials from Woodlawn, Loveland, St. Bernard, Golf Manor, Terrace Park, Forest Park, and Sharonville convened at the Regional Planning Commission offices to learn of programs and resources available to their communities. Critical to their jobs as elected officials in their respective jurisdictions is the ability to find the right balance between their community's financial resources and services to residents.



Keynote speaker Andres Duany at 2007 Planning Partnership Annual Meeting



Participants in the 2007 Planning Commissioners' Forum Peer to Peer Learning



# Planning Partnership

## 2007 Jurisdiction Members

Addyston Village  
 Amberley Village  
 Anderson Township  
 Arlington Heights Village  
 Blue Ash City  
 Cheviot City  
 Cincinnati City  
 Cleves Village  
 Columbia Township  
 Deer Park City  
 Elmwood Place Village  
 Evendale City  
 Fairfax Village  
 Glendale Village  
 Greenhills Village  
 Green Township  
 Hamilton County Commissioners  
 Harrison Township  
 Lockland Village  
 Loveland City  
 Mariemont Village  
 Milford City  
 Newtown Village  
 North Bend Village  
 North College Hill City  
 Reading City  
 Silverton City  
 Springdale City  
 Springfield Township  
 Symmes Township  
 Whitewater Township  
 Wyoming City

## Participants in 2007 Planning Partnership Events

Addyston Village	Glendale Village	OSU Extension - Clermont
Amberley Village	Golf Manor Village	Sharonville City
Anderson Township	Green Township	Silverton City
Betts House Research Center	Greenhills Village	Springdale City
Blue Ash City	Hamilton County Commissioners	St. Bernard City
Butler County	Hamilton County Community Development	Terrace Park Village
Cheviot City	Hamilton County Dept. of Building Inspections	The Drees Company
Cincinnati City	Hamilton County Development Company	University of Cincinnati
Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber	Hamilton County RPC	Village of Indian Hill City
Cincinnati	HOME	West Chester Township
Citilands Development Co.	Kathleen Norris & Assoc.	Women's City Club
Citizens for Civic Renewal	KZF Design	Woodlawn Village
Cleves Village	Lincoln Heights Village	Wyoming City
Colerain Township	Loveland City	
Columbia Township	Madeira City	
Crosby Township	Mason City	
Dearborn County	Milford City	
Elmwood Place Village	Montgomery City	
Fairfax Village	North Bend Village	
Fairfield City	Norwood City	
Fine Arts Fund		
Forest Park City		

## Training for Planning and Zoning Commissioners

The Certified Planning Commissioners' Program is designed for commissioners interested in acquiring basic knowledge to perform his/her role.

The course reviews and reinforces basic principles of planning, zoning, legal and ethical issues, meeting management and facilitation skills through presentation, in class discussion and hands on exercises. In 2007, the Planning Partnership offered three sessions on the following topics:

- Legal and Historic Framework for Planning and Zoning Commissions. Instructor: Tim Burke, Manley Burke
- Site Plan Review. Instructors: Todd Kinskey, AICP and Terrance Vanderman
- Ethics and the Commission. Instructor Greg Dale, FAICP, McBride Dale Clarion

# Planning Partnership



## 2007 Planning Commissioners' Forum Promotes Peer to Peer Learning

The 2007 Planning Commissioners' Forum was held April 21, 2007 at the Drake Conference Center. The event, now in its second year, was organized by and for commissioners of local municipalities and township members of the Planning Partnership. Part of the success of the Forum is its fast pace, the carefully selected discussion topics, and the meeting design, which through small discussion groups, allows personal interaction.

As one of the participants put it "... I learned today that other communities are facing the same issues and that most are willing to work with one another to fix the same problems," while others said they made many personal contacts, got a copy of the Anderson Township Master Plan, learned of Woodlawn's National Guard Facility Redevelopment, the use of NIC Inspectors, the Greenhills rental inspections ordinances, how to deal with big box retailers, and about walking and bike trails.

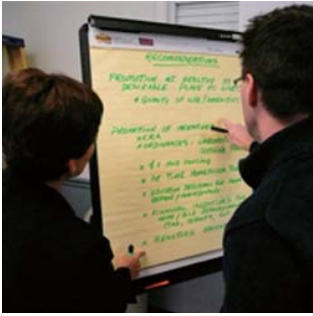
Over 40 participants attended from the following jurisdictions: Addyston, Amberley Village, Anderson Township, Cheviot, Colerain Township, Columbia Township, Elmwood Place, Evendale, Fairfax, Glendale, Golf Manor, Green Township, Greenhills, Loveland, Milford, Montgomery, Madeira, Silverton, Springdale, Woodlawn and Wyoming.

## Communications and Outreach

The Planning Partnership strives to keep its members and other interested parties informed of events and issues relevant to their community planning practices. To that effect, the Planning Partnership publishes the quarterly newsletter UPDATE.

The Planning Partnership Web site is located at [www.hamiltoncountyohio.gov/hcrpc/partner](http://www.hamiltoncountyohio.gov/hcrpc/partner). This site is user friendly, very easy to navigate, and includes a library and a calendar of events that is updated daily.

The Annual Survey is conducted every January among members and volunteers to assess the effectiveness of the Planning Partnership and its initiatives, and to identify common needs and problems of member jurisdictions.



# Community Planning

## Objectives:

*Prepare Strategic Plans for Community COMPASS Initiatives*

*Build partnerships for implementation of Community COMPASS*

*Develop implementation frameworks*

*Support economic development efforts locally and countywide*

## Project Impact

Through Project Impact, RPC works with communities to develop ways to reverse population and job loss and to conserve the unique traditional, historic, authentic, and urbanist qualities of Hamilton County's First Suburbs. RPC launched Project Impact in 2006 to implement goals for revitalization as adopted in Community COMPASS (the countywide comprehensive plan). Project Impact continues to assist local communities struggling with inadequate housing stock, aging infrastructure, shrinking tax bases, obsolete commercial and industrial properties, and increasing social service costs. RPC brings expertise and resources to the table, while providing communities with the tools to implement their revitalization successes.

Programs tailored to each community achieve tangible results within a framework of visioning and strategic planning and set the stage for improved regulations and procedures, residential and commercial district improvements, and community enhancements. Based on capacity, HCRPC launched Project Impact in five communities (Elmwood Place, Cheviot, Golf Manor, Lincoln Heights, and Fairfax) with significant measurable results.

Selected communities receive assistance in the form of situational assessments, community building workshops, and support from a team of experts organized by HCRPC and other partners in disciplines to be determined by the community's unique needs. Project Impact initiatives use the following planning and implementation process.

### 1 Situational Assessment (*Who are we? What do we have?*)

- Community Profile
- Key Person Interviews
- Community Workshop

### 2 Strategic Plans (*What do we want from what we have?*)

- Existing Situation / Opportunity Statements
- Desired Results / Outcomes
- Outcome Indicators / Key Performance Measures
- Outputs / Products

### 3 Action Plans (*How do we get it?*)

- Potential Partners and Commitments
- Research Agenda
- Tasks
- Responsibility
- Schedule
- Budget and Funding

### 4 Implementation

- Implement Action Plans
- Evaluate Progress of Outcomes and Outputs
- Revise Strategies and Action Plans

# Community Planning



Each planner team assigned to a community conducts a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) assessment that subsequently is instrumental in forming goals and strategic plans. As planning initiatives are prioritized, the communities develop strategic plans to help identify their desired results and how they will measure them. A key component is partnering with experts who can assist with providing information and technical expertise. This assistance to the Project Impact community can be in the area of technical expertise such as an urban forester, institutional expertise from a representative from HUD who can assist with the Dollar Home program, or a local resource such as a neighboring community mayor who can relate their own lessons learned stories in revitalization efforts. These resources are of immeasurable value to the communities.

A critical part of Project Impact is providing the local community with resources, information, and tools they can use in their own revitalization work. Success is much greater when citizens take personal and communal responsibility for continuous improvement and where community resources (skills, talent, experience, and knowledge) of individuals, organizations, and businesses are fully used.

Examples of measurable results from Project Impact communities to date include:

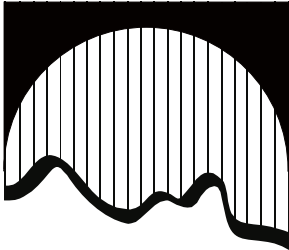
- Home ownership opportunities – (a) purchase of three foreclosed homes through the HUD Dollar Home program with two currently under renovation, (b) first-time home buyers’ workshop in conjunction with local realtors and mortgage lenders attended by over 120 persons [several attendees were pre-qualified for mortgages at the meeting], and (c) realtors’ breakfast to showcase the community to prospective home buyers.
- Housing rehab incentives - Community Reinvestment Area designation put in place to provide property tax incentives for residential and commercial building improvements.
- Improved recreation - (a) new playground installed; (b) parks plan developed in collaboration with college graduate planning class.
- Business district improvements - (a) \$10,000 grant for hanging baskets, (b) \$6,000 grant for street pole banners designed by local high school students, and (c) streetscape plan funded in cooperation with local business association and then leveraged for federal Transportation Enhancement funds for streetscape implementation.

Each Project Impact community is unique, and each is experiencing tangible, positive results from their planning efforts. These communities by their very participation in Project Impact have exhibited a dedication in building up their neighborhoods and business districts one step at a time. Although revitalization is not an overnight process, the road map created through Project Impact serves as a daily guide.





# Community Planning



**First  
Suburbs  
Consortium**  
OF SOUTHWEST OHIO

## 2007 FSC-SW Members

Amberley Village  
Cheviot  
Deer Park  
Elmwood Place  
Evendale  
Forest Park  
Glendale  
Golf Manor  
Greenhills  
Lincoln Heights  
Lockland  
Madeira  
Milford  
Montgomery  
Mt Healthy  
North College Hill  
Reading  
St. Bernard  
Silverton  
Springdale  
Springfield Township  
Wyoming

## First Suburbs Consortium of Southwest Ohio (FSC-SW)

Community membership in the First Suburbs is increasing with three new communities joining in 2007: North College Hill, Reading, and Cheviot. This brings the total membership to 22 communities with a combined population of 182,000 people.

At the January membership meeting, FSC-SW featured Sen. Robert Schuler and a discussion of legislative changes dealing with property foreclosures. April's membership meeting hosted all three County Commissioners. FSC-SW brainstormed different projects to work on with the Board and First Suburbs. In July, a panel of downtown/Main Street redevelopment experts shared ideas on commercial district revitalization. The panel was Judy Kercheval – Council Member, City of Harrison, Loretta Rokey – City Manager, City of Milford, and Bob Yoder – Main Street Manager, City of Newport. November's meeting featured Treasurer Rob Goering and Jim Harper from the Prosecutor's Office discussing how and why property foreclosures take so long in Hamilton County.

In 2007, the Board of Commissioners took an especially active interest in FSC-SW and attended three quarterly membership meetings. Three policy priorities resulted from discussions with the Board and form the basis for ongoing cooperation.

### 1 Economic Development

- need for a "roving economic development specialist" who serves groupings of communities
- need for financial assistance to implement Project Impact recommendations - perhaps through a county commissioner economic development fund
- need to invest in businesses based on potential for increasing sales tax

### 2 Housing

- need for a First Suburbs Development Corporation (a development fund or loan fund to build and renovate housing)
- need for incentives to fix up and revamp older housing (e.g., cover portion of architectural fees)
- need for Home Ownership Center housing assistance program for First Suburbs
- need for a program with incentives (maybe tax abatement) for people to buy rental property and convert to owner-occupied housing)

### 3 Property Foreclosures

- need for the county commissioners to actively support SB 119
- need for access to mortgage foreclosure information for local jurisdictions

FSC-SW concentrated much of their work in 2007 on issues related to foreclosures and vacant/abandoned properties. Sen. Robert Schuler introduced SB 119 which proposes to greatly enhance current foreclosure statutes in Ohio. FSC-SW assisted Sen. Schuler in drafting this bill and supported it during Senate Ways and Means Committee hearings.

# Community Planning



FSC-SW and RPC staff researched forming a first suburbs development corporation in conjunction with other local redevelopment groups, and are working with CAGIS and the Clerk of Courts to make foreclosure data available more quickly.

A new demographic study technique called a DrillDown analysis was conducted for Cincinnati, Newport, and Covington in 2007 by Property Management. The information gathered with this method can be thought of as a replacement for Census data. A DrillDown can “discover” population, income, and potential markets that the Census undercounts or misses entirely. Cincinnati’s study indicates an additional 46,000 people live in the City. This additional population is accompanied by increased household income and spending power, homeownership, and potential retail markets.

Property Management proposes to expand the DrillDown study to other communities in Hamilton County. The analysis only works in densely populated areas which means that most FSC-SW member communities would benefit. Funding for the expanded study is being assembled and RPC will work with Property Management to define the scope and communities that will be included.

In December, representatives from Cincinnati, Dayton, and Cleveland first suburbs met in Columbus with Lt. Governor Lee Fisher and Ohio Department of Development staff to discuss a proposed first suburbs development fund. The idea as described by the Cleveland representatives is to create a designated funding source through the state that would be specifically for projects in First Suburbs Consortium member communities.

## First Suburbs Housing Program

The First Suburbs Housing Program (FSHP) is an initiative of the Regional Planning Commission, in partnership with Housing Opportunities Made Equal (HOME). The program is made possible through a grant from United Way.

Hired in January 2007, JoAnna Brown, a Housing Planner staffs a three-year Workforce Housing Program to assess housing conditions and needs as well as to prepare a housing plan in three first suburb communities: Elmwood Place, Mt. Healthy, and Golf Manor. Ms. Brown will prepare a housing plan for each of these communities (one per year starting with Elmwood Place) that includes recommendations and tools for improving, redeveloping, and/or creating workforce housing. Workforce housing refers to single-family homes, townhouses, condominiums, starter homes, and/or apartments that are affordable to area workers, such as retail and restaurant workers, teachers, firefighters, factory workers, etc. The ultimate outcome of the housing plans is to define opportunities for working families to live affordably within the County by expanding housing options for both homeowners and renters.





## Community Planning

This year resulted in a completed housing plan for the Village of Elmwood Place that addresses both current and future housing needs of the community and adheres to the vision and the goals established by the community. The plan includes an assessment of the existing socio-demographic, housing conditions, and housing market for the Village. A windshield study of two target areas was conducted as part of the study to identify and address residential target areas for redevelopment opportunities. The plan also includes a brief analysis of the Village's economic conditions and status of the business district and makes minor recommendations for improvement.

### Key Accomplishments:

- Prepared housing needs assessment: evaluation of housing and demographic trends
- Conducted a visual housing survey and analysis
- Compiled perspectives on the community's housing market from realtors and developers
- Evaluated building property maintenance code enforcement for effectiveness and provided recommendations for improvements
- Evaluated the permit approval processes and provided recommendations for streamlining
- Developed goals, policies, and recommendations to encourage development/preservation of workforce housing
- Identified housing and community development programs and tools to support workforce housing policies
- Developed measures to assist the community in evaluating progress on achieving housing policies
- Assisted the public with housing planning information
- Coordinated the preparation and adoption of housing plans and appropriate methods to implement plans
- Conducted mapping analysis for special projects and housing plan
- Provided housing informational services to First Suburb communities
- Prepared housing-related grant proposals

### Local Alliance for Nature & Development for Hamilton County (LAND-HC)

The Local Alliance for Nature and Development for Hamilton County (LAND-HC) is composed of volunteer committees with approximately 32 members. Much of the membership comes from local conservation groups such as Green Umbrella, Hillside Trust, Western Wildlife Corridor and Sustainable Cincinnati, along with employees from the Hamilton County Park District and Soil and Water Conservation District. LAND-HC now has three committees: Greenprint/Greenspace, Protection Regulations and Green Building.

LAND-HC committee members commit their time and expertise toward achieving the mission of LAND-HC--- to identify and raise awareness of the value of greenspace to

## Community Planning



residents, business, government, and industry; to engage and support local jurisdictions in planning and preserving an adopted greenprint in their communities; and to influence the balance between development and the environment through the dissemination of information and resources to guide sustainable green design and building practices.

### LAND-HC Committee on Greenprint Greenspace

The Committee on Greenprint Greenspace developed and launched its WEB page in 2007. It features an introduction to the concept of green infrastructure -“an interconnected network of open space that conserves natural ecosystem values and functions and provides associated benefits to human populations,” identifies the economic benefits of greenspace, recommends greenspace priorities, and identifies funding resources and local model greenspace preservation programs (e.g. Anderson and Colerain Townships). Also, a \$4,595 Ohio EPA Ohio Environmental Education Fund Grant for the Hamilton County Greenprint WEB Resources/Greenprint Presentation Program enabled the purchase of four licenses for CITYgreen software and training of three staff members. CITYgreen is a geographic information system software application that runs an extension of ArcView or ArcGIS. It was developed by American Forests to provide communities an affordable way to catalog and analyze benefits of local tree canopy. CITYgreen can measure various benefits of mature tree canopy including carbon sequestration, air pollution removal, cooling effects, and storm water absorption.

### LAND-HC Committee on Greenprint Protection Regulations

The Committee on Greenprint Protection Regulations participated on the Hamilton County Storm Water District support staff in helping to craft the language for the Hamilton County Sensitive Areas Protection Plan and Hamilton County Stream Corridor Rules and Regulations of the Draft Hamilton County Storm Water District Rules and Regulations. The Committee also completed a draft of the LAND-HC Committee on Greenprint Protection Regulations WEB page.

### LAND-HC Committee on Green Buildings

The Committee on Green Building developed and launched its WEB page in 2007 (<http://www.hamiltoncountyohio.gov/hcrpc/partner/land/greenBuilding.asp>). It features reviews of local green building initiatives and projects including City of Cincinnati Green Initiatives, University of Cincinnati's Sustainability Policy, Cincinnati Zoo Harold C. Schott Education Center, and the HOME House Project/Cincinnati Northside Community Urban Redevelopment Corporation (CNCURC). The LAND-HC Green Building WEB page won a National Association of Counties (NACO) 2007 Achievement Award.

The Green Building Committee collaborated with the Over-the-Rhine Foundation and Gray & Pape, Inc. to develop a Certified Local Government Grant Application to the Ohio Historic Preservation Office. The Project Objective are: (1) identify and assess barriers

Local Alliance for  
Nature and Development

# LAND



HAMILTON COUNTY

## Regional Planning Commission



## Community Planning



*Logo created for Hamilton County's Fresh Ideas program.*

to greening historic buildings, (2) identify opportunities for greener historic buildings, and (3) develop recommendations to address conflicts between green renovations and historic tax credit certifications.

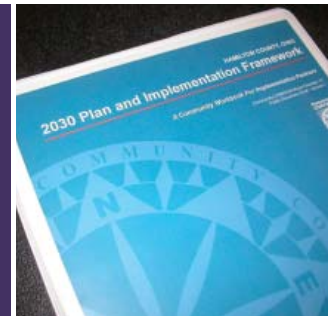
### Public Relations and Graphics

RPC provided graphic production support for numerous Planning Partnership and community planning activities throughout 2007, including meeting preparation and the production of reports, brochures, educational materials, certificates, and maps. Graphic assistance was also provided to the Office of Administrative Services in the creation of the Fresh Ideas logo and the Cincinnati Association for the Greater Cincinnati Commitment brochure.

### Sex Offenders and Communities

RPC completed a Community COMPASS research report on community solutions for prevention, management, and release of sex offenders in Hamilton County, Ohio. Staff conducted the research in response to local government challenges to manage sex offenders residing in their communities while providing for public safety and community stability. Registration, notification, and residency restrictions for sex offenders are used with the expectation that these laws will protect the general public. However, many unintended consequences have arisen from the increasing level of restrictions. The report presents facts and statistics to counter the many myths of who these sex offenders are and their impact on the community. To provide a more effective way to address sex offender issues, the report provides recommendations for consideration by Hamilton County officials based on best practices and staff interviews with persons in law enforcement, criminal justice, social service agencies, treatment community, and citizen organizations.

# Community Planning



## Implementing Community COMPASS

### Community Building Programs:

- **Project Impact - Mission:** To reverse population and job loss, and sustain unique traditional, historic, and authentic qualities of older communities through asset-based community development initiatives and place-based partnerships that accelerate the impact of isolated and incremental efforts
- **First Suburbs Consortium - Mission:** To implement Hamilton County's goals related to sustaining and revitalizing mature built-out communities
- **Local Alliance for Nature and Development - Mission:** To implement Hamilton County's goals related to green infrastructure and green design issues, balancing development and environment, and implementation of the Greenspace Concept Plan
- **Hamilton County Caucus - Mission:** To implement Hamilton County's goals related to transportation and mobility in the context of the region
- **Certified Planning Commissioners' Program - Mission:** To build capacity for successful planning, zoning, and community building through 49 local planning commissions
- **The Government Cooperation and Efficiency Project - Mission:** To help local governments improve service delivery and control costs through cross-jurisdictional cooperation, and service delivery sharing and consolidation
- **Local Government Contractual Services - Mission:** to help ensure that community trends are anticipated, challenges are addressed, priorities are focused, and plans are achieved strategically
- **Hamilton County Data Portraits - Mission:** to fully utilize data and graphic technology in assisting Board of County Commissioners and others to set priorities for community investments
- **Census Challenge - Mission:** To assist communities in submitting challenges to census population estimates and to assure accurate estimates without undercounts
- **Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy - Mission:** To guide economic growth and to qualify for federal Economic Development Administration assistance
- **Sexual Offender Impacts on Communities - Mission:** To evaluate the effectiveness of local residency restrictions and the fairness of importing sexual offenders to Hamilton County
- **Community Action Network Directory - Mission:** to create a searchable online inventory of organizations and programs that are improving our community—fostering connections and relationships for community building
- **Smart Growth Regulatory Audits - Mission:** To assess how well adopted policies and regulations support accepted principals of smart growth
- **Planning Partnership - Mission:** to effectively plan for the future of Hamilton County and build partnerships for plan implementation

*As a result of RPC's Planning Partnership and Community COMPASS (Hamilton County's long range comprehensive plan) more than 50 community building initiatives have been launched in the following programs—each serving as a catalyst for cooperative planning and inter-governmental coordination and achieving progress toward a better future for Hamilton County*



## Information Technology / Data Products

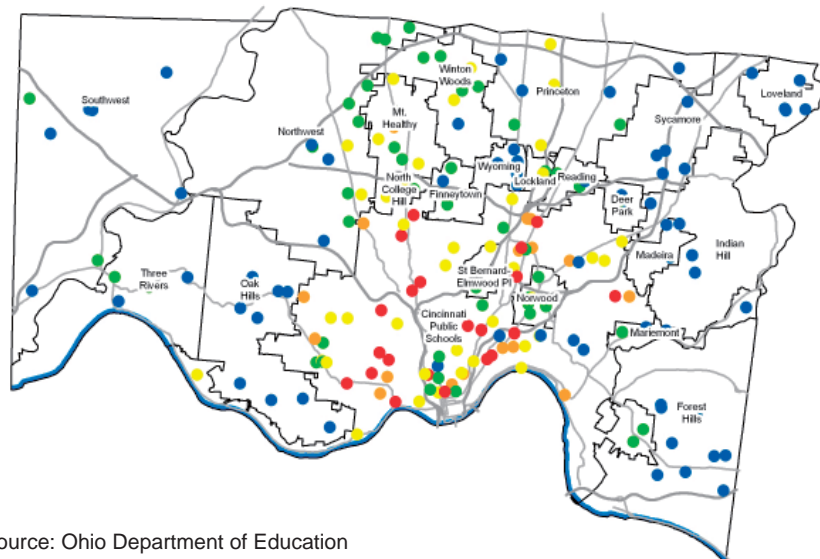
The Information Technology / Data Products section of RPC provides and maintains a Local Area Network (LAN) serving RPC, RZC and BZA. The 36 workstations and three servers in the LAN provide access to the Wide Area Network (WAN) and the Internet, providing all staff members with the tools to excel in their tasks. The section also provides Information Technology services for internal and external customers so they can make sound decisions in a timely manner based on accurate and timely information presented in an easily understood format. The following provides examples of services provided.

### Geographic Information Analysis

The Data Products Section prepares maps and analyses for both internal county customers and the general public for a diverse list of topics. Examples include:

- updating school, day care and pre-school locations and 1,000 ft. buffer surrounding properties
- analyzing data for impact of City of Cincinnati's new day-care buffer ordinance
- importing and converting health/injury information, school performance ranking information, and crime location and crime type information for spatial analysis of Hamilton County Data Portraits on public health, education, and poverty
- custom maps for Job and Family Service Agency regarding children in custody of JFS and the location of services and foster care providers
- custom maps for Hamilton County Communications-911 for use as a learning tool for new staff dispatch employees
- testifying in court for the County and City prosecutor regarding accuracy of CAGIS, signing affidavits regarding CAGIS measurements
- researching, collecting, and mapping the locations of fire department stations and equip-

### 2006-2007 Hamilton County School Performance Index



Data Source: Ohio Department of Education



## Information Technology / Data Products



ment for analysis of coverage in Hamilton County

- using software to calculate tree canopy and green infrastructure's value to communities in terms of stormwater runoff and air pollution removal.

### Web sites

Since 2005, under the directive of the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC), the Regional Planning Commission continues to improve the web site standards and migrate many departments to these standards. The goal is to provide better content, better appearance and ease of navigation.

Regional Planning Commission staff continue to create and provide many different capabilities and information on our County web site. The latest one being a comment form to the BOCC for public comment on the 2008 recommended budget. The Hamilton County web site continues to average 80,000 to 100,000 hits per day.

In addition to the design and maintenance of the department sites, RPC has taken on the responsibility of maintaining web servers. They include the Hamilton County web server, Hamilton County intranet, the testing server and the database server. The Regional Computing Center and RPC will complete the handover in January of 2008.

### Demographic Analysis

Prior to recent challenges of the Census Bureau's population estimates, the county was on pace to lose over 40,000 people in five years dropping below 800,000 people. The city of Cincinnati was the first local jurisdiction to challenge the estimates. The city's successful challenge of the 2005 estimate resulted in a net gain of 25 people for the city compared to a loss of 22,500 people as originally calculated. The result of this challenge was positive for the county as a whole. The Bureau released a county estimate of 822,596 in 2006 compared to a 2005 estimate of 806,652.

In 2007, several jurisdictions, with the assistance of the Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission, decided to challenge their estimates as well. In all, nine communities, including Amberley Village, Blue Ash, Silverton, Wyoming and the Townships of Delhi, Colerain, Green, Springfield, and Symmes, submitted applications that proved the addition of 20,248 people based on new housing development records. The Census Bureau recently released the 2007 County estimates indicating Hamilton County's population at 842,369 people making Hamilton County a stable community since the year 2000.

The Regional Planning Commission now has the opportunity to further the accuracy of the Census numbers through the Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA) Program. Staff is reviewing the Bureau's master list of all addresses that will receive the 2010 questionnaires to ensure inclusion of new developments and the most accurate count in 2010.

---

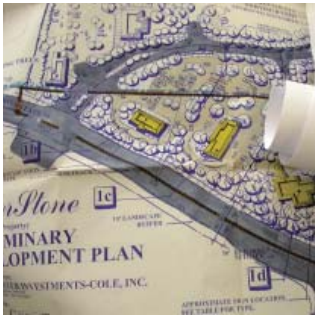
#### Objectives:

*Maintain RPC/RZC/BZA network and "Help Desk" functions as well as Special Requests / Projects*

*Maintain CAGIS database*

*Organize, analyze and distribute 2000 Census Data, internal and external requests for data analysis and maps and support for ongoing Census activities*

*Design and maintain an easy navigated and understandable web site that connects citizens to information and services provided by the County*



# Development Review

## Objectives:

*Process and complete all development review applications - zone amendments, PUDs, conditional uses, land use plans & SPI reports*

*Review and process major/minor subdivisions in compliance with ORC and Hamilton County Regulations*

*Provide address assignment for unincorporated Hamilton County and communities under contract with the Building Department as needed*

## Development Services / Zoning Services

The primary role of the Development Review Team is to coordinate the review of proposed developments that require approval by the Rural Zoning Commission or Board of County Commissioners. This review requires communication with a multitude of stakeholders, including developers, engineers, architects, attorneys, property owners, development review agencies, elected officials, and the general public. This team strives to balance the common good with the rights of private property owners while assuring compliance with established development standards.

In 2007, staff processed 85 cases. Of these, 20 were zone amendments in townships that have local zoning control where the RPC is required by state law to make a recommendation. Another 28 were cases reviewed for the Board of Zoning Appeals and Zoning Commission as part of contractual obligations to administer zoning in Symmes Township. The majority of the remaining 37 cases were located in Hamilton County RZC jurisdiction and include zone amendments, planned unit developments, and other projects requiring some type of review by the Rural Zoning Commission.

## Subdivision Administration

The primary of the Subdivision Administration section is to provide consultation services for landowners, review new preliminary subdivision plans, determine compliance with regulations and other adopted plans, coordinate cross-agency review, prepare maps and staff reports for Planning Commission meetings, review minor subdivisions (lot splits) for compliance with Subdivision Regulations Plans, and prepare addresses for all property in the unincorporated areas of Hamilton County and some incorporated jurisdictions.

In 2007, the RPC approved 10 new major subdivisions containing 812 lots and 43 minor subdivisions containing 81 lots for a total of 893 new lots available for development in the unincorporated portion of Hamilton County.

## Land Use Plan Administration

### Anderson Township

Adopted land use plans for Anderson Township include: the Beechmont Avenue Landscape Plan 1/3/02, Ohio Riverfront Area Proposed Land Use Plan 9/5/02, Anderson Township Revised Sidewalk Plan 4/1/04, the Anderson Trails/Walkways Plan Update 11/3/05, the Beechmont Corridor Study Update 1/5/06, the Beechmont Corridor Vision Plan 1/5/06, and the Clough Pike Business District Plan 7/5/07. RPC also adopted a Comprehensive Plan for the Township on 4/18/05. This plan includes a township-wide land use plan. One LUP amendment (Indian Valley) was adopted by RPC 4/5/07.

### Colerain Township

The Colerain Township Land Use Plan is divided into six sectors. The Township Trust-



# Development Review



ees passed a resolution in 2003 appointing the Colerain Township Zoning Commission as the Township planning authority. The Township continues to request Land Use Plan recommendations from RPC staff, but does not request final adoption by RPC. The Township Trustees have adopted several sector updates as part of this arrangement.

## Columbia Township

Columbia Township completed a Comprehensive Plan for the entire township that was adopted by RPC 6/2/05. The Comprehensive Plan includes a Township-wide land use plan. The Township created Special Public Interest Strategy (SPI) documents for the Plainville Road Corridor and the Ridge and Highland areas to improve the functionality and design of both areas. The Plainville Road Corridor SPI Strategies Plan was adopted by RPC 2/2/06 and the Ridge and Highland SPI Strategies Plan was adopted by RPC 7/6/06.

## Crosby Township

The Crosby Township Land Use Plan, completed by Township officials in June 2003, was adopted by RPC 6/3/04. The Plan encompasses the entire Township.

## Delhi Township

There is no adopted land use plan for Delhi Township

## Eastern Corridor Land Use Vision Plan (ECLUVP)

The ECLUVP was adopted by RPC 8/1/02 as a guide for future land use plans and other matters submitted to RPC for consideration. This Plan is meant to be used as an advisory guide and framework and does not require consistency on a lot-by-lot basis.

## Green Township

The Green Township Land Use Plan Update 2005 was adopted by RPC 6/2/05. The document includes updated text, including goals, strategies, and objectives, and an updated land use plan map. Amendments approved since adoption include: Edgewood Medical (8/4/05), Stroschen Office (1/5/06), Legacy Place Retail (4/6/06), Boomer & Edgewood Office (5/4/06), Harrison & Drew Retail (10/5/06), Hillview Residential (4/5/07), Bridgetown & Beihl Office (7/5/07), and 5470 Rybolt Road (8/2/07).

## Hamilton County 2030 Plan and Implementation Framework

Since the year 2000, RPC has been in the process of completing various components of a comprehensive plan for the future of Hamilton County. One of the main results of this process has been the completion of the 2030 Plan and Implementation Framework. Created with extensive citizen input, the plan contains: the Vision, Initiatives, Strategies and Implementation Status; Policy Plan; 2030 Concept Plans for Countwide Systems; Implementation Campaigns; and Performance Development - Milestones, Products, and Schedule. The plans were adopted by RPC 12/2/04.

## Scope of Development Review

- Zone Amendments
- Planned Unit Developments
- Zoning Compliance Plans (Final Development Plan)
- Major Adjustments or Modifications
- Minor Adjustments
- Board of Zoning Appeals reports



## Development Review

### Harrison Township

The Harrison Township Comprehensive Plan 2020 was initially adopted by RPC 2/1/01. The Township Trustees completed a review of the plan in 2006 and submitted the required Update/5Year Review. The Update was adopted by RPC 5/4/06. Additionally, the Township has an adopted SPI Strategy (9/4/06) to encourage implementation of the Comprehensive Plan goals for southeastern Harrison Township.

### Miami Township

A five year review for the Miami Township Land Use Policy and Strategy Plan was adopted by RPC 8/7/03. The next Update/5-Year Review will be due 8/7/08.

### Springfield Township

A Comprehensive Land Use Plan Update for the entire Township was adopted by RPC 1/5/04. The next Update/5-Year Review will be due 1/5/09.

### Sycamore Township

A comprehensive update for the entire Township Land Use Plan was adopted by RPC 2/6/03. One amendment (Pine Road Office) was adopted by RPC 10/2/03. The next Update/5-Year Review will be due 2/6/08.

### Symmes Township

An Update/5-Year review of the Symmes Township Land Use Plan was adopted by RPC 9/4/03. The next Update/5-year Review will be due 9/4/08.

### Whitewater Township

There is no adopted land use plan for Whitewater Township.

### Western Hamilton County Collaborative Plan (WHCCP)

The WHCCP was adopted by RPC 4/1/99, as a guideline for the future development of 10 Western Hamilton County jurisdictions. It was amended 11/2/2000 to reflect changes in the Land Use Concept Map, and on 1/3/2002 to reflect the addition of new Action Strategy Alternatives to the Plan. This plan is meant to be used as an advisory guide and framework rather than to require consistency on a lot-by-lot basis.

## Development Review Highlights and Accomplishments

### Elmwood Place Zoning Code Project

In conjunction with Project Impact, staff completed Phase 2 of a contract with the Village of Elmwood Place to revise the Village zoning code. Staff coordinated this effort with the Village Planning Commission, meeting regularly to discuss changes. As part of the effort, staff assisted the Village in coordination of the necessary public hearings before the Planning Commission and Village Council. The new code was adopted on September 11 and was passed as an emergency ordinance and went into effect immediately. Staff delivered eight copies of the new code, a digital version for placement on the Village

## Development Review



web site, and three copies of the new zoning map. Following adoption, staff provided insight and direction on interpretation of the new regulations as they pertain to a number of developments.

### Crosby Township Zoning Code Project

Staff completed a contract with the Crosby Township Trustees to finish the comprehensive revisions to the Township Zoning Resolution. Staff assisted the Township in the necessary public hearings before the Township Zoning Commission and Trustees. The new regulations and map changes were formally adopted by the Trustees in March and became effective on April 4th. Staff delivered a master copy and digital version of the new Zoning Resolution in early April to complete the contract.

### Hamilton County Zoning Resolution Amendments

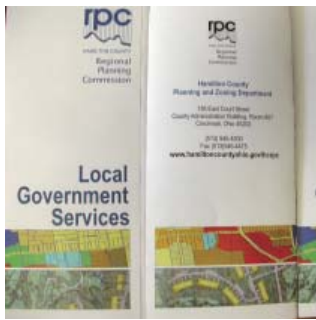
Staff prepared and processed 26 revisions to the Zoning Resolution for the Unincorporated Territory of Hamilton County. The amendments included stormwater management improvements, parking lot reduction incentives, allowing night watchman's quarters in industrial districts, reducing setbacks for corner lots adjacent to private drives, exempting handicap ramps from setback requirements, modifications required to achieve compliance with state law, and clarifications to various sections of the code. The Board of County Commissioners approved the amendments on March 14th and they went into effect April 13th.

### Interagency Development Workshop

Staff is an integral member of this workgroup which is charged with addressing development issues in Hamilton County. The mission of the group is to identify issues that affect multiple agencies and then work collaboratively to implement solutions. In 2007, staff led a subcommittee dealing with development issues associated with Home Owners Associations (HOA). The HOA Subcommittee met several times to develop a set of policy recommendations to address areas of concern. Staff invited two local experts to address the subcommittee to better understand home owner association management issues and related legal issues. The group agreed that the best solution would be to create standard language for all HOAs in Hamilton County and to add standard language to record plats to note maintenance responsibilities. Refinement and implementation is planned to occur in 2008.

### Thoroughfare Plan Review

Staff initiated discussions with the County Engineer and County Administration to consider performing a review of existing Thoroughfare Plan policies and procedures. Possible considerations include: creation of a text to accompany the Thoroughfare Plan map to explain its intent, applicability, and relation to the Access Management Rules and Regulations; the creation of a formal variance/appeal procedure; and creation of exemptions for redevelopment sites that do not generate more traffic. It is envisioned that a collaborative



## Development Review

text addressing these changes will be prepared in the future. As part of this review staff created a new digital Thoroughfare Plan.

### OPC World Town Planning Day Charrette

Staff worked with a subcommittee of the Cincinnati Chapter of the Ohio Planning Conference to plan and conduct the 2007 World Town Planning Day Charrette in the City of Mt. Healthy on November 8th. Staff work included participation in the community selection process, preparation of necessary mapping, web site design/maintenance, pre-charrette photography, event notification, solicitation of participants, and facilitation of the event. The charrette included twenty-two professional planners, thirteen planning students (University of Cincinnati, Miami University and Ohio State University), and eleven representatives from the City of Mt. Healthy including city officials, elected leaders, business owners, and residents. Four different pre-determined teams worked on strategies to implement the recently adopted Comprehensive Plan. The teams worked together to develop graphic and written ideas that culminated with a digital presentation by each team. The final report documenting the results of the charrette are available on-line (<http://www.hamiltoncountyohio.gov/hcrpc/wtpd/default.asp>).

### Glenway SPI Presentation

Staff met with Glenway Avenue business owners and Green Township officials to discuss future changes to the corridor including a proposed Special Public Interest (SPI) zoning district. Staff identified the boundary of a potential new SPI District and with input from Green Township began preparation of an SPI Strategies Plan. Staff anticipates completing this project in 2008.

### Site Plan Workshop

In conjunction with Terry Vanderman from the City of Wyoming, staff conducted the annual Site Plan 101 Workshop for those seeking Planning Commissioner certification. The workshop informs newly appointed commissioners on the necessary skills for reviewing development applications. The training builds analytical abilities for interpretation of site plans and enables thorough review of development projects.

### Madeira Camargo Road Project

Staff obtained a contract with the City of Madeira to provide planning services for a study of the Camargo Road corridor north of Euclid. Staff photographed the corridor, prepared a web resource page to assist participants during the planning process, and coordinated notification to over 400 surrounding properties and businesses. The bulk of the work included in the scope of services will be completed in 2008. More information on this project can be found on-line (<http://www.hamiltoncountyohio.gov/hcrpc/madeira/>).

# Zoning Commission



The Rural Zoning Commission (RZC) serves the Board of County Commissioners by administering and enforcing zoning in four townships and by providing contract services to a number of townships and villages in Hamilton County.

The Zoning Resolution is interpreted and enforced by the office of the County Zoning Inspector. Duties of the RZC administrative staff and Zoning Inspectors include:

- Coordinating zoning amendment review and scheduling of public hearings
- Presenting amendment and other zoning requests before the Regional Planning Commission, Rural Zoning Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals, and Board of County Commissioners
- Maintaining official maps and files
- Assisting the public with zoning information
- Reviewing all building permits for zoning compliance
- Issuing zoning certificates and final zoning inspections certificates for all building permits
- Conducting field inspections on reported zoning violations
- Abating zoning violations through due process
- Maintaining complaint and abatement records
- Updating the zoning regulations

The five members of the Hamilton County Rural Zoning Commission are appointed by the Board of County Commissioners for a five-year term. The members must reside in an area under the jurisdiction of County zoning. In 2004 the Board of County Commissioners voted to include an alternate on the Rural Zoning Commission.

## Zoning Certificates

In 2007, RZC staff issued a total of 807 zoning certificates. Out of that total, 219 certificates were in townships that contract services through the Local Zoning Assistance Center (LZAC) program.

Accessory structures, including fences, walls, swimming pools, decks, detached garages, and sheds, ranked as the highest number of zoning certificates issued in 2007 with a total of 190. The second highest number of zoning certificates issued were for attached/detached single family residential homes - 160. RZC issued a total of 143 zoning certificates for residential room additions, 52 refusal letters, 41 revisions to previously issued zoning certificates, and 116 sign permits. Various commercial applications including new buildings and new tenants totaled 105 zoning certificates.

## Zoning Commissioners, 2007

- Joel Cornelius, Resident of Harrison Township (appointed 2005, current term expires 2010)
- Christian James, Vice Chairman, Resident of Miami Township (appointed 2005, current term expires 2010)
- Susan Olson, Alternate, Resident of Columbia Township (appointed 2004, current term expires 2007)
- Robert Polewski, Resident of Miami Township (reappointed 2003, current term expires 2008)
- David Steinriede, Resident of Green Township (appointed 2006, current term expires 2011)
- Jerry Thomas, Resident of Green Township (appointed 2005, current term expires 2009)





# Zoning Commission

## Objectives:

*Maintain RPC/RZC/  
BZA network and "Help  
Desk" functions as well  
as Special Requests /  
Projects*

*Maintain CAGIS database*

*Organize, analyze and  
distribute 2000 Census  
Data, internal and external  
requests for data analysis  
and maps and support for  
ongoing Census activities*

*Design and maintain an  
easily navigated and  
understandable web site  
that connects citizens to  
information and services  
provided by the County*

In addition to the daily routine of reviewing site plans and issuing zoning certificates, the zoning staff maintain and digitize zoning files, scan and digitize all zoning certificates, issue all house numbers, and assist with system testing for online zoning certificates (EzTrack Online Permits). The EzTrack Online Permits system went "live" on June 11, 2007. This system allows a property owner or contractor to register as a member. Those with projects located in the Hamilton County Zoning jurisdiction can apply for zoning certificates online. The customer completes the online application and attaches digital drawings of the proposed work. Once the application is accepted, the customer can track the project online and will receive e-mail notification related to revisions, approvals, and payments. Certificate fees can be accepted by credit card or trust accounts. A zoning interpretation wiki-internet allows staff to discuss questions on interpretations and make final conclusions. A staff person may create a new page or edit in the wiki, citing the decision maker's name, and the date of the decision.

## Zoning Enforcement

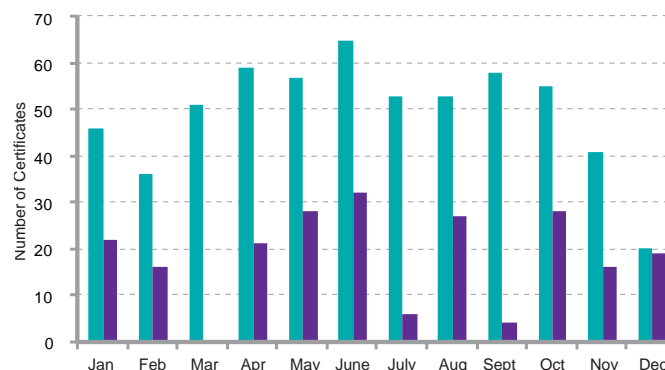
The Hamilton County Rural Zoning Commission enforces the zoning regulations within four townships. However, through the Local Zoning Assistance Center (LZAC), the zoning inspectors enforce nuisance ordinances and zoning regulations in seven additional townships.

The type of zoning violations the zoning inspectors investigated this past year included in-operative vehicles (junk vehicles), fences, sheds and other accessory structures improperly located or without zoning certificates, signs, home occupations, lighting, nonconforming uses, and noise complaints. In 2007, zoning enforcement staff conducted 4,790 zoning violation investigations, resulting in 2,386 zoning violation notices sent to the property owners. There were 2,150 violations abated within 30 days of the first notice, and out of the remaining 239, only 62 resulted in issuing zoning violation citations.

Other activities of the zoning inspectors include the inspection of new construction and

## Zoning Certificate Activity, 2007

Hamilton County Zoning Jurisdictions  
Contract Zoning Jurisdictions



annual inspections of all Planned Districts to assure zoning compliance. The majority of zoning certificates issued in 2007 required more than one or two site inspections. From the 769 zoning certificates issued, 1,339 zoning certificate field inspections were conducted. In addition, inspectors integrated field

# Zoning Commission



inspections with the Permits Plus computer programming links into the CAGIS system to allow for the tracking of enforcement and the location of groups of problem properties.

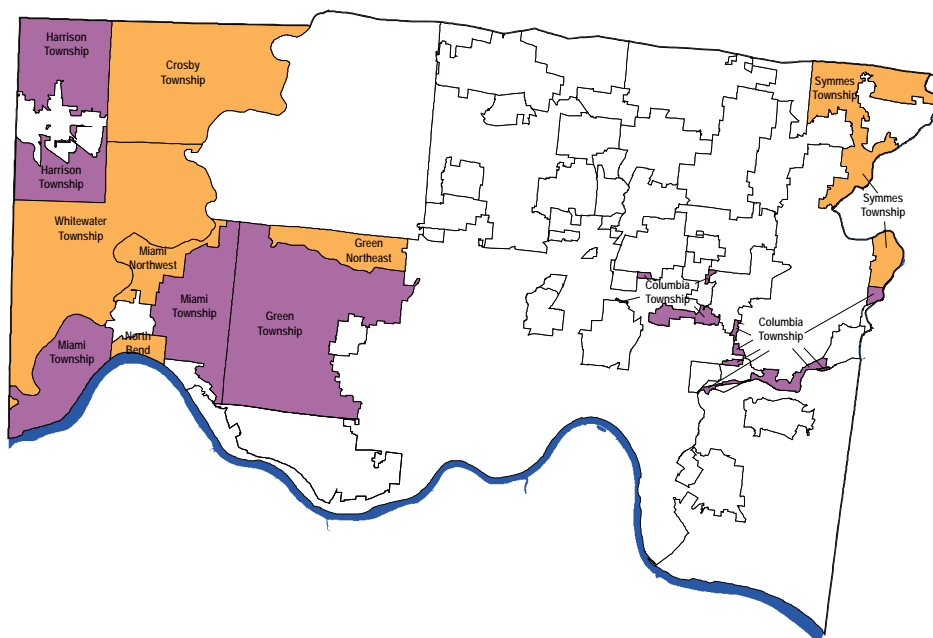
## Local Zoning Assistance Center

The Local Zoning Assistance Center (LZAC), a program administered by the Planning and Zoning Department, is designed to assist cities, townships, and municipalities in the daily operation and enforcement of locally adopted zoning regulations. By using the services of LZAC, participants can realize a significant cost savings while providing individuals in their community the benefit of an experienced, full-time staff.

LZAC is staffed by a team of nine employees: the zoning administrator, two certified land use planners, two plans examiners, two technical/clerical specialists and two enforcement inspectors. RZC has been providing zoning service to the unincorporated area of Hamilton County since the adoption of zoning in 1949 and zoning services through LZAC since 1996. Many of the zoning and land use services available today are based on information in the Cincinnati Area Geographic Information System (CAGIS). The staff of LZAC will work with jurisdictions to design a zoning administration and enforcement program tailored to meet their specific needs and goals.

## Type of Services Provided by the Local Zoning Assistance Center

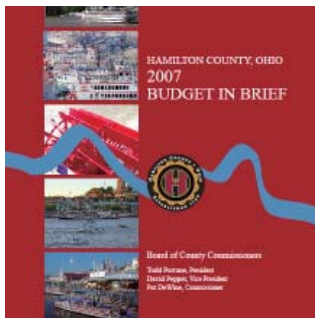
- Zoning certificate review and issuance
- Verbal and written correspondence related to zoning regulations and inquiries
- Field inspection and code enforcement
- Maps, mailing and presentation graphics related to zoning appeals, variances or zone change requests
- Preparation of zoning text amendments and related documents, research and reports



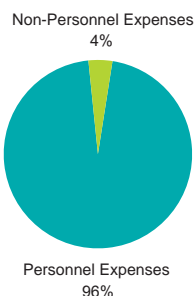
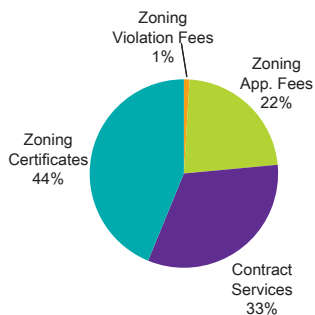
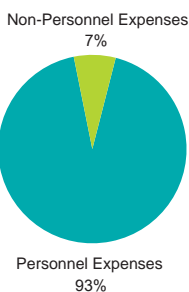
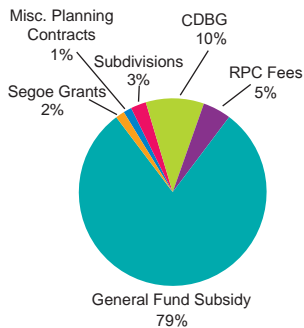
## Zoning Jurisdictions

- Hamilton County Zoning Jurisdiction
- Contract Services Areas





## Planning & Zoning Department Financials



### 2007 RPC Revenue Sources

Misc. Planning Contracts	16,630
Segoe Grants	18,000
Subdivision Fees	31,142
Regional Planning Commission Fees	56,715
Community Development Block Grant	117,000
General Fund Subsidy	926,414

### Total RPC Revenue

**\$1,165,901**

### 2007 RPC Operating Expenses

Personnel	1,133,128
Non-Personnel	87,499

### Total RPC Expenses

**\$1,220,627**

### Beginning Year Balance

**\$282,383**

### Ending Year Balance

**\$227,657**

### 2007 RZC Revenue Sources

Zoning Violation Fees	1,753
Zoning Application Fees	40,738
Contract Services	59,039
Zoning Certificates	79,114

### Total RZC Revenue

**\$180,644**

### 2007 RZC Operating Expenses

Personnel	392,383
Non-Personnel	16,767

### Total RZC Expenses

**\$409,150**

### General Fund Portion of Budget

**\$228,506**

## Staff



**Ron Miller, FAICP**  
Executive Director

**Robert Eaton**  
Systems Administrator /  
Assistant Director

**C. Russell Sparks**  
Zoning Services Administrator

**Caroline Statkus, AICP**  
Planning Services Administrator

**Todd Kinskey, AICP**  
Development Services  
Administrator

**Mark Abell**  
Subdivision Process  
Coordinator

**Lori Adler**  
Zoning Plans Examiner

**Karen Ambrosius**  
Administrative Coordinator

**Mary Berta, AICP**  
Zoning Plans Examiner

**Michael Burman**  
Zoning Inspector

**Andy Dobson, AICP**  
Senior Planner

**Annalee Duganier, AICP**  
Senior Planner

**John Huth**  
Senior Planner

**Carol Kammer**  
Clerical Specialist

**Catalina Landivar-Simon, AICP**  
Senior Planner

**Teresa Lawson**  
Development Review / Zoning  
Specialist

**Cecilia McKinley**  
Zoning Specialist

**Dean Niemeyer, AICP**  
Senior Planner

**Rebecca O'Brien**  
Zoning / Development Review  
Specialist

**Chris Porter**  
Web Developer

**K.D. Rex**  
Senior Planner - GIS

**Bryan Snyder, AICP**  
Senior Planner

**Jay Springer**  
Graphics / Communications  
Specialist

**Bill Waite**  
Zoning Plans Examiner /  
Inspector

UC Planning Co-ops & Interns

**Russell Best**

**Brad Hawse**

**Rob Hayes**

**Geoff Scholl**

**Clint Smith**





## Planning and Zoning Department

# Committees, Teams, and Board Memberships

*In addition to the daily work functions performed by staff in the Planning and Zoning Department, the organization was also actively involved with initiatives in numerous organizations.*

- Agenda 360 Effective Governance Action Team
- Agenda 360 Leadership Team
- Agenda 360 Livable Communities Action Team
- American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP)
- American Planning Association (APA) & Ohio Planning Conference (OPC), Charter Member
- American Society for Public Administration (ASPA)
- CAGIS (Cincinnati Area Geographic Information System) Policy Board
- Cincinnati Association Community Inclusion Panel
- Citizens for Civic Renewal Advisory Board
- Clean Ohio Conservation Program / Natural Resources Assistance Council
- College of Fellows of the American Institute of Certified Planners (FAICP)
- County Planning Directors Association of Ohio (CPDAO)
- Go Cincinnati
- Greater Cincinnati Local Government Managers Association
- Greater Ohio Research Council
- Hamilton County Interagency Development Workgroup
- Hamilton County Economic Development Task Force
- Hamilton County Environmental Action Committee
- Hamilton County Greenprint Initiative Committee
- Hamilton County Homeland Security Council
- Hamilton County Homeowners Preservation Group
- Hamilton County Report Card Committee
- Hamilton County Urban Land Assembly Program / Brownfields Redevelopment Board
- Hamilton County Web Site Committee
- Leadership Cincinnati Alumni Association Board of Trustees
- Leadership Cincinnati, Governance and Civic Engagement Committee
- Mill Creek Watershed Council of Communities
- MSD Public Advisory Committee
- Ohio City/County Management Association (OCMA)
- Ohio Economic Development Association (OEDA)
- Ohio Planning Conference (OPC /APA): Governing Board, Editorial Board
- Ohio - Kentucky - Indiana (OKI) Regional Council of Governments
- Planning Advisory Committee for the Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport Part 150 Study and Master Plan Update
- Planning Partnership Committees: Executive, Editorial, Planning Commissioners' Forum, Training for Planning and Zoning Commissioners
- Strive: Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky
- Sustainable Cincinnati Leadership Group
- University of Cincinnati Board of Executive Advisors in Real Estate
- University of Cincinnati, College of Design, Art, Architecture and Planning (DAAP) Governing Board
- University of Cincinnati Institute for Policy Research Advisory Council
- United Way Social Research Council
- United Way Vibrant Neighborhoods and Communities Vision Council







**Hamilton County Regional  
Planning Commission**

138 E. Court Street, Rm 807  
Cincinnati, OH 45202  
(513) 946-4500  
[www.hamiltoncountyohio.gov/hcrpc](http://www.hamiltoncountyohio.gov/hcrpc)



HAMILTON COUNTY

Regional  
Planning  
Commission